Induction of LCA into IAF

648. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India has invented Light Combat Aircraft; and

(b) if so, when these Aircrafts are likely to join Air Force?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir. The state-of-the-art Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) has been indigenously developed.

(b) The Initial Operational Clearance (IOC) is likely to be obtained by end of 2005 and the Final Operational Clearance (FOC) by end of 2008.

Induction of pilotless aircrafts into army

†649. SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to include pilotless aircrafts in army keeping in view the security of the country and activities of Pakistan;

(b) if so, when; and

(c) whether Government would manufacture pilotless aircrafts on large scale keeping in view the requirement and long border of the country?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) The pilotless aircrafts (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles) have already been inducted and are functional in the Armed Forces. The development work of an indigenous UAV is already under way. In view of the sensitive nature of the information, it may not be in public interest to disclose further details in this regard on the Floor of the House.

Detection of unmanned Pak spy plane over Gujarat

650. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether an unmanned Pak spy plane was detected over the Kutch Border of Gujarat recently;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.